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Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00
DLOS-09 /055 W
----------098105 120216Z /72
R 110813Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BISSAU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0494
INFO AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIS, PU
SUBJECT: GUINEA-BISSAU CRACKS DOWN ON ILLEGAL FISHING

REF: A) BISSAU 0116; B) BISSAU 0338

1. STATE SECRETARIAT FOR FISHING CREATED LAST APRIL HAS BEGUN BACKING UP ITS GET TOUGH POLICY WITH CONCRETE ACTIONS. ACTING IN CONJUNCTION WITH AIR FORCE, WHICH SUPPLIED SMALL SPOTTER PLANE, AND ARMY, WHICH SUPPLIED ARMED BOARDING FORCE, FISHING SECRETARIAT CAPTURED THREE VESSELS ILLEGALLY FISHING IN GUINEAN WATERS LAST WEEK. TWO ITALIAN AND ONE SENEGALESE VESSELS WERE SEIZED USING BISSAU-BASED SOVIET TRAWLER AS PATROL VESSEL. ITALIAN VESSELS HAVE BEEN FINED 300,000 PG EACH (APPROX. DOLS 9,250), HAD THEIR CATCHES CONFISCATED AND THEIR CAPTAINS THREATENED WITH FIVE-YEAR PRISON SENTENCES OR PAYMENT OF ADDITIONAL FINE OF 450,000 PG (APPROX. DOLS 13,890). THE FINES WERE PAID BUT VESSELS HAVE NOT YET LEFT BISSAU AWAITING OUTCOME OF ITALIAN GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION ON THEIR BEHALF.
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2. LAST WEEKS ACTION FOLLOWS SIMILAR SEIZURE LAST MARCH OF TWO SENEGALESE AND ONE ITALIAN FISHING VESSEL WHICH WERE FINED AND RELEASED. STATE SECRETARY FOR FISHING JOSEPH TURPIN SAYS GOGB PLANS TO BE EVEN TOUGHER IN FUTURE WITH SEIZED VESSELS BUT IS SEVERELY LIMITED IN ITS ABILITY TO PATROL ITS RICH FISHING WATERS. CESSNA AIRCRAFT COMPANY HAS BEEN CONTACTED CON-

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CERNING THE PURCHASE OF A PATROL PLANE AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNDERWAY WITH ENGLISH AND FRENCH FIRMS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A PATROL BOAT.

3. GUINEA-BISSAU HAS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF GUINEA-CONAKRY, THE LARGEST CONTINENTAL SHELF IN ITS FISHING WATERS BETWEEN CAPES BLANC AND GOOD HOPE. FRENCH AND RUSSIAN STUDIES HAVE VERIFIED THE EXTREME RICHNESS OF THESE WATERS WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY WENT VIRTUALLY UNREGULATED BY A NAIVE AND TRUSTING GOVERNMENT IN BISSAU. ACCORDS WITH FRANCE, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE CONSIDERED BY GOGB AMONG MOST FAVORABLE TO THEM SO FAR NEGOTIATED YET THE THIRTY FRENCH TRAWLERS IN GUINEAN WATERS PAY AN AVERAGE OF DOLS 3,000 YEARLY EACH FOR RIGHTS TO SHRIMP CATCHES WHICH, ACCORDING TO TURPIN, CAN EASILY TOTAL HALF A MILLION DOLLARS PER MONTH SOLD IN DAKAR.

4. TURPIN PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO BUILD HIS OWN INDEPEN-DENT INTERDICTION CAPABILITY IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH ILLEGAL SOVIET FISHING. BECAUSE GOGB HAS USED SOVIET TRAWLER WITH SOVIET CREW IT HAS ONLY CAPTURED NON-SOVIET VESSELS TO DATE. SOVIET TRAWLERS ARE WARNED OFF BY RADIO MESSAGES FROM THEIR MATES ON THE PATROL VESSEL ACCORDING TO TURPIN. TURPIN WILL BE IN MOSCOW IN MID-AUGUST TO RENEGOTIATE EXISTING FISHING COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WITH SOVIETS (REF B) WHICH HE CALLS TOTALLY INADEQUATE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHICH PRESIDENT CABRAL HAS ALSO PUBLICALLY CRITICIZED.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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